

5/23/04 Evangelicals preparing to 'Battle for Marriage'

By **PAUL ASAY**
THE GAZETTE

A who's who of evangelical leaders will try to shore up conservative Christian opposition to same-sex marriage through a nationally broadcast event Sunday at New Life Church.

"Faith, Family and Freedom: The Battle for Marriage," will be aired on the Trinity Broadcasting Network and on the Bott Radio Network and shown in churches nationwide, event officials said.

"It's our response to what's going on in Massachusetts," said the Rev. Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals and senior pastor of New Life.

Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage this week.

Supporters of traditional marriage fear the precedent could rock marriage protection laws, which 38 states have.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., said only an amendment to the U.S. Constitution will preserve a traditional interpretation of marriage.

An amendment to the Constitution must be passed by a two-thirds majority in the House and Senate and then must be approved by three-fourths of the states.

"It's turned into a real public policy crisis," Perkins said. "I think people are concerned, and rightfully so."

DETAILS

Faith, Family and Freedom: The Battle for Marriage

When: 6 p.m. Sunday

Where: New Life Church, 11025 Highway 83



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The event will be broadcast on the Internet. For information, go to www.frc.org.

Perkins and Haggard will speak at the event.

They will be joined by James Dobson of Focus on the Family, Bishop Wellington Boone of Wellington Boone Ministries and, via video, Chuck Colson of Prison Fellowship Ministries.

Perkins said each man brings a different perspective to the issue, although all are firmly committed to outlawing same-sex marriage.

The event will be attached to a Sunday evening New Life worship service, which begins at 5:30 p.m.. The event will get under way at 6 p.m. and will last 90 minutes.

The Family Research Council's Web site (www.frc.org) listed 285 churches by May 20 as having agreed to simulcast the event.

The event will be available for purchase via an Internet broadcast. Visit www.dvstudios.com/ccn/frc_webcast.html for information.

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